

Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure (APT) Committee

Department of Regenerative Medicine and Cell Biology (RMCB)

Guidelines and Procedures:

Background

Professional development is one of the most critical processes facilitated by our Department. With the rapidly changing funding environment, our faculty members face new challenges to the progress of their career. **Our Departmental guidelines are developed strictly in accordance with the guidelines and criteria for appointment, promotion and tenure in the MUSC College of Medicine (COM)**, which can be found at:

<http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/com/faculty/apt/forms/guidelines.pdf>

*** Role of Appointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee (APTC):**

The remit of the Departmental APT committee is as a **committee that advises the Departmental Chair** of the Department of Regenerative Medicine and Cell Biology on matters regarding appointment, promotion and tenure. **The APT committee does not make decisions on appointment, promotion and tenure proposals to the COM.** The Departmental Chair makes all such decisions taking into account the advice of the APT committee.

*** Charge:**

The MUSC Faculty Hand Book guidelines indicate that the APT committee should:

1. Review initial appointments, including adjunct appointments,
2. Evaluate faculty seeking promotion, track change, and tenure,
3. Review tenured faculty.

*** Composition:**

The APTC consist of:

1. **Permanent members:** All tenured full Professors with their primary appointment in the Department of Regenerative Medicine and Cell Biology.
2. **Temporary members:** These can be other tenured and non-tenured Professors at MUSC and affiliated Institutions, Associate Professors at MUSC (including RMCB) and affiliated Institutions, and Assistant Professors at MUSC (including RMCB) and affiliated Institutions (temporary members typically serve a two year term).

Temporary members are appointed by the Departmental Chair, who should strive to ensure the highest level of diversity (e.g., gender, minorities) on the APT committee. A further consideration for appointment to the committee should be to provide training and experience opportunities for junior faculty in the APT committee. A majority of members should be members of the Department, but the **chair may appoint up to 3 members from outside of the Department to achieve the goal of convening a committee reflecting the necessary experience, diversity and balance of view point.** The chair of the committee will be appointed by the Departmental Chair and should be a full Professor within the Department. The Departmental Chair will also appoint a co-chair who will step in to chair the APT committee as necessary. **The positions of chair and co-chair of the APT committee are balanced to reflect the primary research and education missions of the Department.**

*** Voting Procedure:**

The voting procedures are in large part prescribed by the College of Medicine and can be summarized as follows.

- **Only faculty at or above the rank for which the individual is being considered may propose, second or vote on decisions involving the promotion.** All members of the committee who are not in conflict (see below) may be present and are encouraged to participate in the discussion leading up to the vote.
- **Only tenured faculty may propose, second or vote on decisions involving individuals seeking tenure or on review of tenured faculty.** All members of the committee who are not in conflict may be present and are encouraged to participate in the discussion leading up to the vote.

*** Conflict of Interest:**

Conflict of interest in a Department such as ours presents special challenges. On the one hand, actual and perceived conflicts should be avoided or mitigated. On the other hand, in a group of people working together of our size it is recognized that patterns of relationship are complex, intertwined and often longstanding. Taking this into consideration the following procedure has been adopted:

- Committee members who serve in a current supervisory role to faculty members being evaluated for appointments/promotion/tenure should excuse themselves from the process

- Committee members who have a spousal or close relationship to faculty members being evaluated for appointments/promotion/tenure should excuse themselves from the process
- Committee members who have had prior professional or personal conflicts with faculty members being evaluated for appointments/promotion/tenure should excuse themselves from the process
- If a faculty member being evaluated for promotion/tenure believes that a prior professional or personal conflict with an APT committee member may affect the objective decision making of the APT committee member, **the faculty member may ask the chairperson of the APT committee or Departmental chair to consider excusing the APT committee member from the discussion of his/her case.** The request by the candidate does not mean that the individual suggested to be in conflict will necessarily be removed from deliberation by the APT committee. It is up to the chair of the APT and the Departmental Chair to decide the appropriate course of action.

*** Track changes**

- Recommendations of **faculty track changes at Assistant Professor/Instructor levels are made by the Departmental Chair directly to the Chair of the College Medicine Promotion and Tenure committee.**
- Recommendations of track changes at the level of Associate/Full Professor are discussed and voted on in the APTC.
- The forwarding of candidates for track change to the APTC and a final decision on change of track is wholly at the discretion of the chair. There is no requirement for an open competition for the new appointment within the Department that will be made as a result of a faculty track change.

***Procedures:**

- The promotion and tenure process for each faculty member is usually initiated when that faculty member meets with the Departmental Chair as part of his/her annual progress interview, which generally takes place between June and August. **It is the responsibility of all faculty members to ensure that an up-to-date CV is provided to the Departmental Chair and lodged with the Departmental Office by February 1 of each year.**
- In addition, the chair and co-chair of the APT committee may also identify individuals that based on their CV and accomplishments might be considered for track-change, promotion, and/or tenure. The names of these individuals should then be forwarded to the Departmental chair and other APT committee members for comment. Other APT committee members should also be invited to suggest faculty that may have been over

looked up to this point. The goal is to cast the net as broadly as possible in this initial step.

- Identified candidates should be invited to review their CV and other supporting documents, prepared according to COM guidelines (see URL above), and make needed updates to prepare for consideration by the APTC. **To guide the candidates, a faculty mentor (as provided in the Departmental Mentoring plan) should assist the candidate in preparing and/or reviewing their CV and other pertinent documents.**
- Once candidates have been identified, the APT committee chair will convene a meeting(s) of the full APT committee in August-September (for those that want to submit their packets to the COM in December) or in February-March (for submission in May). For information on deadlines see:
<http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/com/faculty/apt/musc/index.html>
- The full APT committee meetings are structured like study sections. Each candidate for promotion is assigned a primary, secondary and a tertiary reviewer by the APT committee chair. The reviewers will be given specific instructions regarding the COM criteria that need to be evaluated by the APT committee chair. The APT committee chair will see to it that any committee member with a conflict of interest is excused.
- At the face-to-face APT committee meeting, the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate are presented and discussed as proscribed by COM policies. Any failures to meet specific COM policies (e.g., not enough peer reviewed publications) will be identified. Based on the discussion of relevant information the APT committee should then vote on the merits of the case of each candidate as to whether to recommend the faculty member to the Departmental Chair for forwarding their case for appointment, promotion and/or tenure to the COM promotion and tenure (P&T) committee. The APT committee chair should then write a report summarizing the discussion and recommendation of the APT committee for the Departmental Chair.
- The Departmental Chair will then consider the recommendations of the APT committee. **If the Departmental Chair accepts the recommendation that an individual's case merits forwarding to the COM P&T committee, the Departmental APT committee chair should then seek the necessary documents and letters from the candidate and their referees in a timely manner to meet the required deadlines.** If the Departmental Chair rejects the recommendation of the committee it is incumbent on the Departmental Chair to inform the candidate and the APT committee as to the reasons for his/her decision.

Policy Notes on APT committee Procedures:

- **All recommendations of the APTC regarding appointment, track change, promotion and tenure should be made solely based on the criteria outlined in the COM Guidelines.**
- The vote should be up or down on the merits of candidate as fitting the criteria outlined in the COM Guidelines. **There should be no discussion of information that does not pertain directly to the relevant achievements and merits of the candidate under consideration.**
- **There should be no discussion of the arrangements for financing the appointment or promotion,** which are the purview of the Chair of the Department in consultation with the Dean of the College of Medicine.
- In the case of a tied vote, the decision should be returned to the Chair of the Department who among other courses of action has the option to defer a decision so that further information can be gathered to assist him/her with their choice. The Chair may also choose to reconvene the committee to reconsider the matter after gathering further information.